



## **Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes Emergency Meeting**

Date: Tuesday September 8, 2020

Time: 8:00 PM- 9:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Emergency Meeting called by Co-chairs

**\*Notice to the Public on meeting privacy\*** In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the telephone dial-in information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12- 2020/download>

Attendees: Co-chairs Grossman and Bauer, Commissioners Baron, Brown, Haynes, Jolin, Minton, Pusey, Rogers, Soneja, Rogers

DEI Coordinator: Jillian Harvey

Interns: Tessa Erbe, Annika Benn

Community Members: Julia Forsythe, Andy Robinson, Allison Dahl

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00pm by Co-chair Grossman

### **I. AHRC Statement and Positions on Events planned for Thursday**

Co-chair Grossman gave the details of the America Backs the Blue rally to be held at Arlington Town Hall on Sep 10, appeared to be affiliated with a known hate group as profiled by Anti-Defamation League and Southern Poverty Law Center. A counter protest has been

organized at a separate location.

Co-chair Bauer described what the Commission has done thus far:

- A small group from the Commission met and drafted a statement, released on Monday Sep 7.
- Co-chairs met with the Town Manager, Chief of Police, Rainbow Commission, and others to discuss the Commission's intent and urge appropriate action. The Town Manager released a statement that covered the Town departments.
- HRC received 19 emails. Details ranged from concerns about the rally, about it overly emphasizing the Commission's work and relationship with the Arlington Police Department, and a suggestion to display Hate has No Home signs at Town Hall in response

Co-chair Grossman suggested that this emergency was an opportunity for Commissioners to voice their opinion and consider further action, including endorsement of the statement, posters/signage around Town Hall. Commissioners were asked to help in responding to emails.

Discussion amongst Commissioners included the following points:

- A balanced statement
- Town Manager released an appropriate statement
- Suggestions were made for further actions by other Boards and Town Manager
- A hope for a positive outcome of the meeting between the APD and organizers of the rally
- Questions were answered: the organizers did not file for permits and they are not required, the police have reached out to the organizers to ensure safety for all
- Further discussion about other details, e.g. number of anticipated participants, need to be ready for questions about the rally, additional details about rally organizers

Commissioners made proposals and suggestions including: signage, Black Lives Matter painted sign across Town Hall, request that the Town Manager prepare a press conference. The request that residents display Hate Has No Home Here and/or Love Lives Here signs all over the town was agreed to. Commissioner Haynes volunteered to draft a release.

Commissioners Minton, Soneja, Rogers volunteered to email those that contacted the AHRC, with thanks from the co-chairs.

Co-chairs asked for a volunteer to attend as an HRC representative for the planned roundtable in preparation for the last Community Conversation with Lt. Pedrini. The roundtable will provide feedback to Allentza Michel, consultant to the Town regarding the conversation.

Commissioner Minton proposed the motion to adjourn, Commissioner Brown seconded. All voted in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.